AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS:

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

Listing Of Claims:

Please amend the claims as follows:

1.   (Currently Amended) A method of managing a memory of a computer to share configuration information with a plurality of processes, the method comprising ~~the steps of~~:

(a) allocating a region of a memory of a computer for storing configuration information usable by at least one process of a plurality of processes, the region of memory being shareable with the plurality of processes;

(b) receiving initial configuration information;

(c) storing the initial configuration information in the region of memory;

(d) receiving subsequent configuration information;

(e) storing the subsequent configuration information without disturbing or impeding access by the plurality of processes to the initial configuration information already stored in the region of memory, wherein storing the subsequent configuration information further comprises determining whether the subsequent configuration information comprises information constituting a revision of at least one portion of the initial configuration information and if so, copying at least one portion of the initial configuration information that is not revised by the subsequent configuration information to a previously unused portion of the region of memory appropriate for the type of value of the at least one portion of the initial configuration information and inserting the

subsequent configuration information at an appropriate memory location relative to the copied portions of the initial configuration information; and

(f) after storing the subsequent configuration information, making the subsequent configuration information accessible to the at least one process of the plurality of processes.

2. (Currently Amended) The method of Claim 1, ~~wherein the method~~ further comprising ~~includes a step (g) of~~ associating revision level data with the subsequent configuration information indicating that the subsequent configuration information has been more recently stored in the region of memory than the initial configuration information.

3. (Currently Amended) The method of Claim 2, ~~wherein the method~~ further ~~includes a step (h) of~~ comprising providing the revision level data associated with the subsequent configuration information to the at least one process of the plurality of processes to enable the at least one process to determine whether the process is presently using the most recently stored configuration information.

4. (Original) The method of Claim 1, wherein the step (f) of making the subsequent configuration information accessible includes changing a pointer to direct the at least one process to the stored subsequent configuration information instead of the stored initial configuration information.

5.   (Original) The method of Claim 1, wherein the method further includes a step (g) of, after receiving subsequent configuration information, determining whether the region of memory has sufficient capacity to store the subsequent configuration information or does not have sufficient capacity to store the subsequent configuration information.

6.   (Currently Amended) The method of Claim 5, wherein the region of memory comprises a first region of memory, and ~~wherein the method~~ further comprising: ~~includes a step (h) of,~~

upon determining that the first region of memory does not have sufficient capacity to store the subsequent configuration information, allocating a second region of a memory of the computer for storing the subsequent configuration information~~;~~ and

wherein ~~the step (e) of~~ storing the subsequent configuration information includes storing the subsequent configuration information in the second region of memory.

7.   (Currently Amended) The method of Claim 6, ~~wherein the method~~ further comprising ~~includes a step (i) of~~, after storing the subsequent configuration information in the second region of memory, updating validity data associated with the first region of memory to indicate that the first region of memory no longer contains valid configuration information for use by the at least one process of the plurality of processes.

8.   (Currently Amended) The method of Claim 7, ~~wherein the method~~ further comprising ~~includes a step (i) of~~, after updating validity data, providing the validity data associated with the first region of memory to the at least one process of the plurality of processes to enable the at least one process to determine whether the process is presently using valid configuration information.

9.   (Currently Amended) The method of Claim 6, ~~wherein the method~~ further comprising ~~includes a step (i) of~~, after storing the subsequent configuration information in the second region of memory, storing a pointer in the memory of the computer which points to the second region of memory.

10.   (Currently Amended) The method of Claim 9, wherein the subsequent configuration information corresponds to a particular configuration parameter having a unique identifier, and ~~wherein the method~~ further comprising ~~includes a step (i) of~~ associating the unique identifier and the stored pointer pointing to the second region of memory.

11.   (Original) The method of Claim 10, wherein the particular configuration parameter includes a port.

12.   (Original) The method of Claim 10, wherein the particular configuration parameter includes a genre.

13.   (Original) The method of Claim 1, wherein step (c) of storing the initial configuration information includes determining whether storage of the initial configuration information requires the storage of a character string value and if so, storing the character string value in a sub-region of the region of memory dedicated to the storage of character strings.

14.   (Original) The method of Claim 13, wherein step (c) of storing the initial configuration information further includes, after storing the character string value, establishing pointers in at least one other sub-region of the region of memory which enable the at least one process of the plurality of processes to read the character string value.

15.   (Original) The method of Claim 1, wherein step (c) of storing the initial configuration information includes determining whether storage of the initial configuration information requires the storage of a numeric value and if so, storing the numeric value in a sub-region of the region of memory dedicated to the storage of numeric values and of pointers to character string values.

16.   (Original) The method of Claim 15, wherein step (c) of storing the initial configuration information further includes, after storing the numeric value, establishing pointers in at least one other sub-region of the region of memory which enable the at least one process of the plurality of processes to read the numeric value.

17.   (Canceled)

18.   (Currently Amended) The method of Claim ~~17~~ 1, wherein if the type of value of the at least one portion of the initial configuration information corresponds to a character string, the previously unused portion of the region of memory appropriate for the type of value of the at least one portion of the initial configuration information includes a sub-region of the region of memory dedicated to the storage of character string values.

19.   (Currently Amended) The method of Claim ~~17~~ 1, wherein if the type of value of the at least one portion of the initial configuration information corresponds to a number, the previously unused portion of the region of memory appropriate for the type of value of the at least one portion of the initial configuration information includes a sub-region of the region of memory dedicated to the storage of numeric values.

20.   (Currently Amended) The method of Claim 1, wherein the region of memory is a first region of memory for storing configuration information associated with a first configuration parameter of a first type, and ~~wherein the method~~ further comprising ~~includes a step (g) of~~ allocating a second region of memory for storing configuration information associated with a second configuration parameter of a second type.

21.   (Original) The method of Claim 20, wherein the first type comprises a poll.

22.   (Original) The method of Claim 20, wherein the second type comprises a genre.

22.   (Canceled)

23.   (Original) The method of Claim 1, wherein the particular configuration parameter constitutes a port.

24.   (Original) The method of Claim 1, wherein the particular configuration parameter constitutes a genre.

25.   (Original) The method of Claim 1, wherein the processes of the plurality of processes are executable only at the computer.

26.   (Original) The method of Claim 1, wherein the region of memory includes a contiguous region of memory.

Claims 27.-75   (Canceled)

76.   (New) A computer-readable medium which stores a set of instructions which when executed performs a method for managing a memory of a computer to share configuration information with a plurality of processes, the method executed by the set of instructions comprising:

(a) allocating a region of a memory of a computer for storing configuration information usable by at least one process of a plurality of processes, the region of memory being shareable with the plurality of processes;

(b) receiving initial configuration information;

(c) storing the initial configuration information in the region of memory;

(d) receiving subsequent configuration information;

(e) storing the subsequent configuration information without disturbing or impeding access by the plurality of processes to the initial configuration information already stored in the region of memory, wherein storing the subsequent configuration information further comprises determining whether the subsequent configuration information comprises information constituting a revision of at least one portion of the initial configuration information and if so, copying at least one portion of the initial configuration information that is not revised by the subsequent configuration information to a previously unused portion of the region of memory appropriate for the type of value of the at least one portion of the initial configuration information and inserting the subsequent configuration information at an appropriate memory location relative to the copied portions of the initial configuration information; and

(f) make the subsequent configuration information accessible to the at least one process of the plurality of processes after storing the subsequent configuration information.

77.   (New) A system for managing a memory of a computer to share configuration information with a plurality of processes, the system comprising:

a memory storage; and

a processing unit coupled to the memory storage, wherein the processing unit is operative to:

(a) allocate a region of a memory of a computer for storing configuration information usable by at least one process of a plurality of processes, the region of memory being shareable with the plurality of processes;

(b) receive initial configuration information;

(c) store the initial configuration information in the region of memory;

(d) receive subsequent configuration information;

(e) store the subsequent configuration information without disturbing or impeding access by the plurality of processes to the initial configuration information already stored in the region of memory, wherein the processing unit being operative to store the subsequent configuration information further comprises the processing unit being operative to determine whether the subsequent configuration information comprises information constituting a revision of at least one portion of the initial configuration information and if so, copying at least one portion of the initial configuration information that is not revised by the subsequent configuration information to a previously unused portion of the region of memory appropriate for the type of value of the at least one portion of the initial configuration information and inserting the subsequent configuration information at an appropriate memory location relative to the copied portions of the initial configuration information; and

(f) after store the subsequent configuration information, making the subsequent configuration information accessible to the at least one process of the plurality of processes.

78.   (New) The method of Claim 1, wherein the initial configuration information pertains to a particular configuration parameter, and wherein the subsequent configuration information pertains to the same particular configuration parameter.